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UNCLAS ANKARA 001791

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SUBJECT: TURKISH AIRLINES SUSPENDS FLIGHTS TO KUWAIT

Turkish Airlines (THY) announced March 20 that it was suspending its operations to Kuwait; it did not announce a date for resumption of operations. THY currently operates two flights per week to Kuwait. This news tracks with what THY's Chief of Marketing told econoff March 18. The Chief of Marketing said that the airline likely would suspend operations to Kuwait once the Iraq operation began. Otherwise, she said, THY would only change its normal schedule under the following circumstances: 1) In case of airspace closures that made it impossible for them to reach their destination; 2) if their insurance underwriter dramatically raised rates, making a certain flight prohibitively expensive; and 3) in the case of U.S. flights, if passenger demand fell sharply.

PEARSON